



# Washington

School for the Deaf

**Strategic Plan  
2005-2007**

# **WASHINGTON SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF**

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **AGENCY OVERVIEW – OPERATIONAL BUDGET 2005-2007**

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Washington School for the Deaf is to address the needs of deaf/hard of hearing students throughout the state by providing instructional services, partnering with other parents and other agencies for systemic, integrated services to improve learning outcomes regardless of where the students attend school.

#### **STATUTORY AUTHORITY REFERENCES**

Chapter 72.40 RCW – The Washington School for the Deaf, established by territorial and state authority, provides comprehensive educational programs for students whose hearing loss requires special programs.

RCW 72.40.010	School Established – Purpose
RCW 72.40.019	Appointment of Superintendent – Qualifications
RCW 72.40.022	Superintendents – Powers and Duties
RCW 72.40.024	Superintendents – Additional powers and duties
RCW 72.40.028	Teachers’ qualifications – salaries-Provisional certifications
RCW 72.40.031	School year – School term – legal holidays – use of school
RCW 72.40.040	Who may be admitted
RCW 72.40.050	Admission of nonresidents
RCW 72.40.060	Duties of school districts
RCW 72.40.070	Duties of educational service districts
RCW 72.40.080	Duty of parents
RCW 72.40.090	Weekend transportation – Expense
RCW 72.40.100	Penalty
RCW 72.40.110	Employees’ hours of labor
RCW 72.40.120	School for the Deaf – School for the Blind – Appropriations
RCW 72.40.200	Safety of students and protection from child abuse and neglect
RCW 72.40.210	Reports to parents – Requirement
RCW 72.40.220	Behavior management policies, procedures, and techniques
RCW 72.40.230	Staff orientation and training
RCW 72.40.240	Residential staffing requirement
RCW 72.40.250	Protection from child abuse and neglect – Supervision of employees and volunteers – Procedures
RCW 72.40.260	Protection from child abuse and neglect – student instruction
RCW 72.40.270	Protection from sexual victimization – Policy
RCW 72.42	Board of Trustees
PL 100-297	Federal Education for all Handicapped Children -State Operated Programs
PL IDEA	Formerly PL 94-142
PL 99-457	Federal Education for all Handicapped Children (Birth to Six)

## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES**

### **G-1 Students will meet or exceed state academic standards**

#### **O-1.1 Students will demonstrate one-year's growth in both mathematics and reading levels on an annual basis.**

- S-1.1.1 Yearly progress in reading, writing, and math will be compiled and disaggregated for all students, not just those undergoing WASL testing for any particular year. Results and successes will be shared with the Board of Trustees and other stakeholder groups.
- S-1.1.2 A specific staff member will be assigned the responsibility of aggregating and disaggregating achievement data and reporting the results to all stakeholders.
- S-1.1.3 The School Improvement plan will be reviewed and revised each year to establish reasonable instructional goals and measurable outcomes for students in light of previous years' learning results.
- S-1.1.4 Students will review their assessment results and be involved in plans to improve their performance.
- S-1.1.5 WSD will revise our elementary report card to identify progress along the scope and sequence of the curriculum, along with progress toward identified EALRs.

#### **O-1.2 WSD will formally adopt curriculums designed to facilitate student progress toward state academic standards.**

- S-1.2.1 The staff will collaboratively implement a spiraling curriculum to assure continuity of instruction across grade levels.
- S-1.2.2 WSD will establish a curriculum adoption process that will include various stakeholder groups and culminate in formal Board approval.
- S-1.2.3 WSD will inventory existing reading and math materials for grades 5-12 and determine additional needed materials.

#### **O-1.3 WSD will increase the educational opportunities for students to master state academic standards.**

- S-1.3.1 Adjust the working day of one certificated teacher to coordinate the after school tutor center in concert with residential personnel.
- S-1.3.2 WSD will provide a summer school curriculum to provide additional learning opportunities for day-students who may not otherwise qualify for Extended School Year services.
- S-1.3.3 Specific training for staff and a package of services will be developed to address the literacy and communication needs of English Language Learning (ELL) students.
- S-1.3.4 WSD will provide instruction to all students in test-taking strategies specific to WASL testing protocols.
- S-1.3.5 WSD will implement supplemental reading expectations for students by assessed ability level across the content areas.

### **G-2 Students will be provided increased opportunities in middle- and high-school to achieve anticipated post-school outcomes consistent with gainful employment or post-secondary school enrollment.**

- O-2.1 WSD will increase on-campus vocational opportunities for enrolled high school students and students enrolled in the public schools seeking short-term placements for transition planning.
  - S-2.1.1 WSD's after-school elective program will identify and prioritize activities that are vocational in nature or otherwise align with common transitional activities that prepare students for post-school outcomes.
  - S-2.1.2 The Independent Living Skills program will be expanded to serve all enrolled juniors and seniors, and will be articulated with a specific curriculum which complements transition planning as provided in the IEP.
  - S-2.1.3 WSD will provide opportunities to develop career path training on its campus utilizing existing resources such as the nutrition services, maintenance shop, residential elective programs, etc.
  - S-2.1.4 WSD will convene a focus group to design and implement a plan to provide a spiraling experience of career and vocational opportunities for its students.
- O-2.2 WSD will provide off-campus vocational opportunities for enrolled high school students.
  - S-2.2.1 WSD will offer to assign a certificated instructor to an external vocational training facility to provide curricular modifications and student instructional support for enrolled students. On a space-available basis, other deaf or hard of hearing students served in the public schools could access the services of the assigned teacher from WSD.
  - S-2.2.2 WSD will provide vocational placements within the greater SW Washington community to all students at least once during their high school career.
- O-2.3 A continuing partnership will be formed with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation to gather information about the educational and employment needs of deaf and hard of hearing young adults and to develop programs to assist them to be successful in both educational and employment experiences.
  - S-2.3.1 A WSD staff member will be assigned responsibility for coordination with DVR and associated agencies.
  - S-2.3.2 All WSD juniors will be provided assistance in arranging services through DVR.
- G-3 Commensurate to their roles, WSD employees will demonstrate proficiency in written English and American Sign Language as well as competency in their other job duties.
  - S-3.1.1 One third of the staff will have their sign language proficiency evaluated, cycling through all staff every three years.
  - S-3.1.2 WSD will align the community ASL classes with the various sign language proficiency levels so that staff can participate in a class specifically designed to advance their ASL proficiency.
  - S-3.1.3 WSD will select and implement a test of written English to gauge need for staff development opportunities in written English fluency.
- O-3.2 Staff development activities will be derived from demonstrated instructional and supervisory needs of students.
  - S-3.2.1 WSD staff with student contact will be provided training in the design and implementation of functional behavioral assessments and positive behavioral intervention plans.

- O-3.3 A comprehensive, focused and individualized staff development plan will be developed and annually revised.
  - S-3.3.1 Staff evaluations will be linked to professional development goals, which will be derived, in part, from each staff member's annual performance review.
- G-4 WSD will use technology to the maximum degree possible to assist students to meet their developmental goals.
  - O-4.1 WSD will implement emerging technologies which show promise in aiding the learning of deaf and hard of hearing students. Data will be collected to assess the effectiveness of the technology.
    - S-4.1.1 WSD will implement a two-year pilot project utilizing Computer Assisted Real Time (CART)/captioning and related technologies to enhance instruction and increase reading proficiency.
    - S-4.1.2 WSD will use distance learning techniques where it will be useful to families or to school districts as they work with their deaf, hard of hearing and students with cochlear implants.
    - S-4.1.3 WSD will create a library of DVDs highlighting instructional practices that can be used at home to solidify concepts learned at school.
  - O-4.2 WSD will provide technology skill development that is student-specific and individualized.
    - S-4.2.1 WSD will develop and implement a technology scope and sequence at each instructional level.
    - S-4.2.2 WSD will assess the technology skills of each student upon entry and utilize the data to guide further technology instruction for each student.
    - S-4.2.3 WSD will provide a link on their current website that is student-operated, under the supervision of WSD staff.
- G-5 WSD will continually work to enhance the instructional program and school environment in order to support a variety of educational methods.
  - O-5.1 WSD will establish an ASL immersion program for enrolled students in grades k-12.
    - S-5.1.1 The ASL immersion program will be strengthened, based on the current program model.
    - S-5.1.2 Because the goal of effective communication is paramount for WSD students, the staff will develop the collective capacity to use consistent communications techniques in their instruction. However, students who have the capacity to develop multiple methods of communication shall be supported in that effort.
  - O-5.2 WSD will assess the number as well as the educational needs of deaf, hard of hearing and students with cochlear implants and determine what its role should be in serving those students, assisting their families and/or supporting the work of those public schools which serve them.
    - S-5.2.1 WSD will partner with the Vancouver School District to provide expanded service delivery for deaf, hard of hearing, students with cochlear implants and others who might benefit from integration with hearing peers.
    - S-5.2.2 WSD will develop an informational brochure for school districts detailing our consultant services for deaf, hard of hearing, and students with cochlear implants.

O-5.3 WSD will implement construction projects in each of the next three biennia designed to provide an instructionally appropriate and safe learning environment.

S-5.3.1 WSD will implement a series of prioritized minor works projects for each of the next three biennia which will assure a safe environment and increase the capacity of the school to serve the changing needs of its students.

S-5.3.2 WSD will develop a comprehensive plan for the construction of new campus facilities which is based on:

- i. Disaggregated enrollment projections that take into account such things as the incidence of cochlear implants, diverse behavioral patterns and any changes in family preferences for the learning of their children;
- ii. A revised assessment of the school's role in using a variety of methods to serve the diverse needs of deaf, hard of hearing and students with cochlear implants; and
- iii. An analysis of how the school will collaborate with families, public schools, and other agencies to assist in the development and education of deaf, hard of hearing, and students with cochlear implants.

G-6 WSD will establish statewide partnerships with parents to encourage positive, active parental involvement in the education of their children.

O-6.1 WSD will implement strategies to increase parent participation.

S-6.1.1 WSD will establish a free, statewide parent organization with a membership of at least five percent of parents in Washington with deaf, hard of hearing or children with cochlear implants.

S-6.1.2 WSD will assign lead responsibility to a staff member to facilitate parent education as well as devise ways to foster more effective direct and timely communication between individual teachers, counselors and parents.

S-6.1.3 Parents and parent organizations will be contacted and given useful information at least four times each year.

S-6.1.4 WSD will establish ongoing summer learning experiences designed for parents, siblings and students through the early elementary grades.

S-6.1.5 At least once every three years, each student will receive a home visit by a staff representative from WSD. Home visits for high school students will focus on needed transitional services at WSD and in the immediate community, to prepare the student for post-school outcomes.

O-6.2 WSD will demonstrate 100% compliance in providing notice to parents and school district personnel regarding IEP meetings.

S-6.2.1 Individual Education Plan meetings via teleconferencing or videoconferencing will increase each year.

S-6.2.2 WSD will adopt a Video Relay Service to increase parent-student communication.

G-7 WSD will be recognized as the educational resource center for deaf, hard of hearing, and children with cochlear implants in the state of Washington.

O-7.1 WSD will maintain regular communications and seek to establish formal working relationships with other agencies (e.g. OSPI, ESDs, WSDS, DSHS, DVR, public school districts) to ensure a comprehensive, efficient and integrated system of

educational and developmental services to deaf, hard of hearing and students with cochlear implants.

- S-7.1.1 WSD will assess its capacity to support public schools in the development of students' transition plans, in the assessment of the learning needs of deaf, hard of hearing and students with cochlear implants, and in other areas requiring technical expertise which may not be readily available to all school districts.
- S-7.1.2 WSD will participate with DSHS and OSPI in assessing the needs of families for early intervention services and developing standards as well as identifying appropriate roles for various agencies in serving those needs.
- S-7.1.3 WSD will develop a series of student leadership activities that are available to deaf and hard of hearing students statewide.
- S-7.1.4 WSD will partner with other state agencies to improve service delivery to children aged birth to three identified as deaf or hard of hearing.
- S-7.1.5 WSD will expand videoconferencing and on-site support for educational interpreters in the public school setting.
- S-7.1.6 WSD will include an English language learning (ELL) component to the Outreach team to provide assistance to enrolled students whose first language is neither ASL nor English, and provide outreach assistance to those students enrolled in their local public school.
- S-7.1.7 WSD will create an expansive outreach directory for parents of deaf, hard of hearing and children with cochlear implants statewide that identifies community resources, including but not limited to adding pertinent educational links to WSD's website.
- S-7.1.8 The Outreach team will include a teacher consultant familiar with deaf and hard of hearing children with cognitive or social emotional challenges.
- S-7.1.9 The Outreach team will include a residential staff member who is familiar with the recreational and independent living skill needs of deaf, hard of hearing and students with cochlear implants.

G-8 WSD will support students in demonstrating effective citizenship and increased pro-social behaviors

O-8.1 WSD will develop a school-wide behavior management system that seeks to increase pro-social behaviors as well as decrease socially maladaptive behaviors.

- S-8.1.1 WSD will implement a positive behavioral support system in the residential program that provides rewards and privileges commensurate to specific acts of pro-social behaviors.
- S-8.1.2 WSD will modify their behavior management system utilized in the school environment to identify positive motivators for pro-social behaviors.
- S-8.1.3 WSD will implement a Service Learning requirement for high school graduation.

## **APPRAISAL OF EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT**

Due to increased efforts by local communities to better identify children with special needs, and improved assistive listening technologies accessible to a greater number of individuals, the agency has expanded its focus from a center-based campus in Vancouver to include a greater

statewide involvement in communities, primarily those lacking the hard-to-recruit highly trained specialists. Greater numbers of children are being identified for need of early intervention to better prepare them for entrance into their local community schools. Hospitals are seeking support to transition infants from initial hospital contact to services in the communities for both client and family members.

A second significant external factor is the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as “No Child Left Behind”. Hearing loss often results in severe language delay in the formative years, resulting in significant poor school performance. Schools are, and will continue to struggle in providing hard to recruit specialty services needed to bring deaf and hard of hearing students up to par with their hearing peers.

A third significant external factor is the clear need for additional training in independent living skills for high school graduates from the local public schools and WSD. The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation shares their concern with WSD about these young adults unprepared to deal with the daily challenges of school to work or post- high school education transition.

### **TRENDS IN CUSTOMER CHARACTERISTICS**

WSD anticipates that early identification of hearing loss in infants and toddlers will receive greater attention and focused intervention in the near future. With early detection comes an increasing need for early intervention, which to date receives limited fiscal and staffing resources.

While an increasing number of potential school age clients are being served by their local community public schools, often students apply for attendance to WSD in the second half of their school career (grades 6 to 12) with serious deficiencies in language, reading and math. Traditional remediation is not sufficient for students to “catch up”.

The above, combined with higher expectations on the job, contributes to high school graduates not being marketable and continuing to depend on SSI. There is no statewide effort to rectify the situation for deaf and hard of hearing high school graduates from local public schools and WSD.

### **STRATEGY AND CAPACITY ASSESSMENT**

While it is not anticipated that civil service reform will have a major impact on the daily operations of the school, there may be opportunities for new service delivery models in the future. Current agency staffing is adequate at this juncture if demand remains at current levels but the need for additional staff could be affected by an increase in the requests for Outreach Services or a requirement for increased staffing ratios in the evening.

Many of current facilities on campus need to be replaced. The buildings are outdated and do not meet current code or the needs of the school. The Capital Budget Request for the 2005-07 Biennium will begin to address these concerns. The request will concentrate on replacing/relocating the kitchen and maintenance buildings. This will allow the school to remove some of the older and least useful buildings preparing the way for the eventual construction of a



new educational building and gymnasium. Given the conclusions of the JLARC committee report to the Legislature last biennium, the Board of Trustees and the school will reexamine the capacity question and develop a request for the 2007-09 Biennium that will be based on revised estimates and changing program needs.

## **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

Because WSD is the only public residential school for the deaf in Washington State, it is difficult to compare performance results with like organizations. However, our aggregated student achievement results compare similarly with children in home school districts, and are on par with student achievement statistics nationwide. For individual student achievement, our students range from multiply disabled students with significant cognitive challenges to students performing at the post-high school range for reading and math.

Specific to our performance goals, as of the second quarter of the 2003-04 school year, 80% of our performance measures are being met or exceeded. In areas that we have not met our target, WSD is working diligently to meet those goals. Additional reading labs and tutor centers are being targeted for students with reading difficulties. WSD adopted the Accelerated Reader program to provide computerized, self-directed practice in reading comprehension tasks. In regards to parent training, a staff member will be assigned to work in four targeted areas of the state to provide sign language training pertinent to safety issues.

## **DISCUSSION OF MAJOR PARTNERS**

The Washington School for the Deaf is actively pursuing partnerships with various groups throughout the state including other state agencies, colleges, ESD's, schools, and various groups dedicated to improving opportunities for the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

***Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*** – WSD works in cooperation with OSPI to offer services to the deaf and hard-of-hearing students throughout the state.

***Educational Service Districts*** – WSD meets with the various Special Education Directors from the ESD's and their local school districts establishing needs assessments and to present WSD as one component in the continuum of service options for their students.

***Clark College and Washington State University-Vancouver*** - WSD has a relationship with both CC and WSU-V to increase capacity of both institutions to provide greater opportunities for WSD students to attend, and for deaf and hard of hearing college students to excel in their academic studies.

***Department of Vocational Rehabilitation*** - WSD will be working with DVR to explore a possible post high school independent living program for deaf and hard of hearing students from both public schools and WSD. This program would be for students who graduate but require an additional year of remediation and training to be better prepared to transition to work or further training.

***DSHS – Early Childhood Committee*** - The recently passed HB 2765 established a committee to study the needs of birth to 3 deaf and hard-of-hearing children. WSD will be an active member of this committee and will be working with the other members to improve the service delivery to this population.

***Centers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing*** – These centers are located through out the state and while primarily serving the adult deaf and hard-of-hearing population they are a valuable resource for WSD. They can provide assistance with the transition of our students to the work force. Additionally, some of the centers are connected to the K20 system and can facilitate video conferencing between the parents of our students and the school for meetings thereby avoiding lengthy travel for either the parents or our staff.

***Vancouver School District*** – In cooperation with the district, WSD has established a program at Harney Elementary School that supports VSD efforts to offer services to their students. Some of our students have been able to join the class at Harney which has expanded their educational experience. WSD is also exploring the possibilities of locating one of our teachers at the local Skills Center. This teacher will be able to offer support for the Skills Center when they are working with deaf and hard-of-hearing students from both WSD and the local school districts.

***WSD Parent-Staff Organization*** – The Parent Staff Organization (PSO) is designed to: promote the well-being of deaf children at home, school and community; secure adequate laws for education of deaf and hard of hearing children; establish close relationships between the home and school; and develop a relationship between the school and community that promotes the highest degree of physical, mental, social, and emotional development in deaf and hard of hearing children.

***WSD Alumni Association*** – The association strives to further the well-being of WSD and its alumni by achieving various objectives, some of which include: promote and increase the development of WSD as an ideal educational institution for Deaf and hard of hearing students; provide a student leadership award; serve as a support base for WSD graduating students and prospective students; promote and preserve school/alumni heritage; and to support and advocate for the rights of deaf citizens and the cultural richness of the Deaf community.

## **FINANCIAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT**

Since the agency generates little revenue we are reliant on the fiscal health of the state. Given the General Fund shortfalls in the last few years the agency has experienced decreases in our funding. While these budget reductions have been painful, they have given the school the opportunity to examine our operations and to refocus on the core mission of the school. Continued reductions would be difficult to absorb and could result in a diminished capacity.

## **RISKS, OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT THE AGENCY FACES**

By not fulfilling the goals of the Strategic Plan, the agency will fail the deaf and hard-of-hearing students of the state. Students are often unable to advocate for themselves, and parents often are unprepared to challenge the system and successfully advocate for their children. Because our population is a low incidence population, professional opinion clearly suggests that without the significant intervention provided by professionals in the field of deafness, larger number of deaf and hard of hearing students will be unsuccessful on the job and rely on SSI as adults.

## **INTERNAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT**

The agency has been successful in recruiting highly qualified individuals for several hard to fill positions such as Audiologist, Speech-Language Pathologist and a Psychologist. Additionally, within the next few months WSD will complete the process for hiring a new Assistant Superintendent and a new Principal. This will complete our reorganization.

The analysis of the agency self assessment that was conducted last spring was revealing in many aspects. Staff scored the agency high in the areas of customer relations, strategic planning, and information analysis. WSD has placed a great deal of emphasis on data relating to student performance and behavior. WSD has used the performance data to concentrate efforts on improving reading scores. Historically, our students come to the school far behind grade level in reading and language. A great deal of effort has been put forth in this area and we were experiencing improvement on a student by student basis. It is hard to quantify an overall improvement for the school because of a changing student population. WSD has used the data on student behavior: (1) to locate areas of the campus or times when disruptive behavior occurs and to either add staff supervision or change the student flow, (2) to be able to spot/document disruptive students and develop behavior plans for those students which will enable them to improve.

As mentioned in the “STRATEGY AND CAPACITY ASSESSMENT” the facilities at the school are in dire need of improvement, renovation or replacement. WSD will be submitting a Capital Budget request that will be addressing these needs. The Board of Trustees and WSD are committed to improving the campus facilities. The request will be scaled back from our last request and will take into account the JLARC report. A slower approach will allow the agency to review our data on student population and to incorporate new programs for the deaf and hard-of-hearing students within the state.